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ABSTRACT

In this issue of Communique a program to enhance communication skills in counseling is presented. The books reviewed are about transactional analysis and behavioral self-control. The vibrations column covers new developments in various areas of counseling as well as recent research and materials. Other research is reported on. (WS)

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communique

February 1972 — resources for practicing counselors Vol. 2, No. 4

CG 400 072

exemplary practices

A Program to Enhance Communication Skills in Counseling

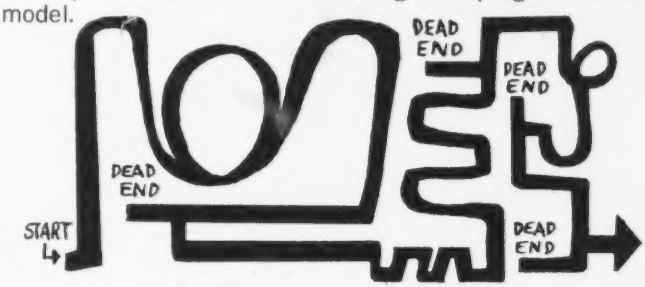
What can I do to assess my communication skills in the counseling interview? What exercises seem to be most relevant in peer counselor training programs? As these frequently asked questions suggest, many counselors are vitally concerned with updating their counseling skills, particularly in the area of affective communication. Whether the counseling interview involves personal-social interaction, career exploration, or educational guidance, the quality of the interaction process in the interview session is of prime significance.

Parallel to the concern for up-dated personal professional skills, counselors are examining the value and role of paraprofessionals in the counseling setting. Helping professionals are particularly concerned with developing and using training activities that will realistically prepare paraprofessional counselors to function in the one-to-one counseling relationship.

David Drum and Robert Mandell, based on a model designed by Robert Carkhuff, have recently developed a series of activities which can be used either in updating counselor skills or in paraprofessional counselor training programs.

The program, **Exercises in Communication and Discrimination,** focuses on assessing affective communication. The counselor or paraprofessional counselor is asked to react to five counseling situations by first writing counselor responses and second, rating four given responses to each of the five settings. For meaningful results, it is recommended that those completing these exercises be instructed to write their responses to the five settings before rating the given statements for the five situations. The major goal of these exercises is to help the counselor evaluate the kinds of counselor responses that are most helpful in facilitating client self-exploration. It is hoped that these exercises will stimulate professional interaction and counselor self-assessment. This program is appropriate for both professional and paraprofessional counselors, and is ready for use in any setting.

It should be noted, however, that the settings described in this program are examples. The authors have developed a variety of situations to deal with numerous client concerns. The authors suggest that counselors develop their own situations using this program as a model.



For further information, **Communique** readers may contact: Dr. David Drum, Director of Counseling, Roosevelt Hall, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island 02881 or Dr. Robert Mandell, Counseling Psychologist, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Tennessee 37415.

Exercises In Communication and Discrimination

Name _____

Date _____

The following pages contain five statements which you should assume are made to you by other persons. For each statement, your first task is to write what you consider to be an appropriate and helpful response to the person.

Your second task for each statement is to rate four given responses to the statement. Rate each of the four responses from 1 to 5 in terms of its helpfulness.

A rating of 1 implies no or minimal help, and a rating of 5 implies a high degree of help. First, write your own response to each of the five statements, then go back and rate the four given responses to each of the five statements.

Statement 1-a

Setting

A teenage girl says to you, "My parents think everything I believe in is wrong and everything they believe in is right. They think I am just no good."

WRITE WHAT YOU WOULD SAY

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do Not Turn the Page Until You Have Written Your Response

Statement 1-b

Circle your rating

1 2 3 4 5	You and your parents are worlds apart. And just because you believe in different things, they never think you're right.
1 2 3 4 5	You know one day you're going to be a parent too. How would you like your kid to behave like you're doing?
1 2 3 4 5	You say your parents never give you a chance—never look at your side of things. It sounds like you and your parents have lost respect for each other.
1 2 3 4 5	It sure seems like just being different is enough to get you into trouble with your parents, doesn't it?

Statement 2-a

While you are talking with a teenage boy, he starts to cry and says, "I'm hurting all I can stand. It's become too much of a hassle. Life must have more to offer. I want help before it's too late, if it isn't already."

WRITE WHAT YOU WOULD SAY

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do Not Turn the Page Until You Have Written Your Response

Statement 2-b

Circle Your Rating

1 2 3 4 5	Life just can't be as bad as you're making it out to be. You're young and have a lot to live for.
1 2 3 4 5	It sounds as though you just can't take anymore. You've had a hell of a time and now you'd like to see if something can be done about it.
1 2 3 4 5	Yes, life does have many sides to it. What does life mean to you?
1 2 3 4 5	You're really down aren't you? It seems as though life is not worth it anymore. Sounds like even though things are really bad that you don't want to quit on yourself until you really know if you're a wipeout.

Statement 3-a

Setting

A mother makes the statement to you as she leaves her two boys for summer camp, "I sure hope you can do something with them. I've tried everything I know, including praying for them for 10 years, but they just get meaner every day.

WRITE WHAT YOU WOULD SAY

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do Not Turn the Page Until You Have Written Your Response

Statement 3-b

Circle Your Rating

1 2 3 4 5	Sounds like you've had a rough time with those boys, Mrs. Smith, in spite of all you've tried to do for them. You don't know what to try next and you really feel like giving them to us for awhile.

1 2 3 4 5	Don't you worry at all, Mrs. Smith. Even though you've had some trouble with them, we'll be able to do some good. We've had lots of rowdy kids here before and we know how to handle them. Just leave them to us.
1 2 3 4 5	Its a hard job raising two boys like that. But they'll probably be okay in time.
1 2 3 4 5	Sounds like you've had some pretty rough times with those boys, and you're hoping we could help.

Statement 4-a

Setting

One of the people you are working with comes into your office and says, "My husband told me that I'm starting to think that I'm better than he is since I started going to college through the New Careers Program.

WRITE WHAT YOU WOULD SAY

Do Not Turn the Page Until You Have Written Your Response

Statement 4-b

Circle Your Rating

1 2 3 4 5	This New Careers Program—does it pay your way through college?
1 2 3 4 5	While you want to improve yourself, it's really frustrating because it seems to be hurting your relationship with your husband.
1 2 3 4 5	Do you think you're better than he is?
1 2 3 4 5	So you started college under the New Careers Program and then your husband said you're starting to think you're superior to him.

Statement 5-a

Setting

A person enters your office and says, "My wife says I'm an alcoholic. I drink a lot, but it's only because she nags me all the time. I can't concentrate on my job any more because of her constant complaining."

WRITE WHAT YOU WOULD SAY

Do Not Turn the Page Until You Have Written Your Response

Statement 5-b

Circle Your Rating

1 2 3 4 5	What does being an alcoholic mean to you?
1 2 3 4 5	Well, drinking a lot doesn't necessarily mean you're an alcoholic.
1 2 3 4 5	You feel your heavy drinking is because your wife is always getting on you. She thinks you're an alcoholic and this whole thing is hurting your concentration when you're working.
1 2 3 4 5	Wow, your wife is really on your back—she says you're an alcoholic. You seem to be saying she is driving you to drink. And to top it off with all this hanging over your head, it sounds as though you're wondering if you will be able to keep your job.

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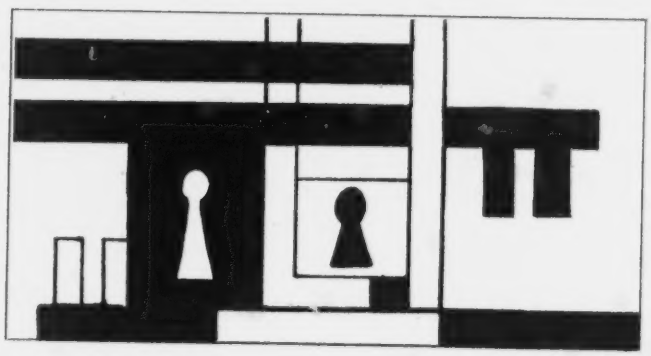

Two Books On Transactional Analysis and Its Uses

Training programs in Transactional Analysis are available for counselors who want to utilize its techniques with clients. Such programs explain not only methodology but provide a "public" language suitable for the discussion of psychology and universal societal problems. T.A. is used with groups in schools, state hospitals, prisons and various institutions. It can be used for marital counseling, family counseling, adolescent problems, increasing self-awareness, etc. The concepts of T.A. can be of great benefit to the counselor, helping him better understand human behavior and providing useful techniques for helping clients. T.A. may also enhance the counselor's own growth and self-understanding.

Two recent books provide an excellent introduction to transactional analysis:

- **Born to Win: Transactional Analysis with Gestalt Experiments.** Muriel James and Dorothy Jongeward.
- **I'm O.K.—You're O.K.: A Practical Guide to Transactional Analysis.** Thomas G. Harris, M.D.

Born to Win explains T.A. and its application to people's lives. It provides a framework through which people interested in personal growth and higher levels of awareness can work toward becoming autonomous, spontaneous, well-integrated adults. The book contains Gestalt-oriented experiments to supplement T.A. theories and methods. The experiments are based on the authors' own experiences with students and counselors.

In **I'm O.K.—You're O.K.,** Harris distinguishes the three elements in each person's makeup: the Parent, the Adult, and the Child. The goal of T.A. is the emancipation of the Adult from the Parent and Child, allowing for freedom of choice and the creation of new options. He explains the four life positions underlying people's behavior (I'm O.K. —You're O.K.; I'm not O.K.—You're O.K. etc.) He shows how T.A. can be used therapeutically with different groups and in various situations.

Behavioral Self-Control: Power to the Person. Michael J. Mahoney and Carl E. Thoresen.

People's incessant struggles to exercise self-control have been hindered by their misconceptions about its nature. Self-control is viewed in this document as a complex behavior, as a sequence of specific acts influenced by conditions both internal and external to the person. A person can exercise self-control when he has learned how to manage these internal and external conditions. Three general strategies by which people can learn and use self-control (or self-management) skills are explained and illustrated: self-observation, environmental planning, and manipulation of the consequences of behavior by self-administered techniques. The results of the few studies conducted to date indicate that all three strategies can be effective and that at least one of them is present in all successful attempts at self-control.

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VIBRATIONS

Congress Approves Expansion of Youth Conservation Corps

Congress recently approved a bill to expand the Youth Conservation Corps and establish it on a permanent basis. The Corps was established as a pilot program in 1970 to provide summer employment for youths 15 to 19 working on lands administered by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior. Congress increased its support following a report from Interior that YCC projects provided a return of 75 cents for every Federal dollar spent.

If the President approves the bill, it is projected that by 1974, 50,000 jobs will be available under the YCC program. In the past two years, in keeping with its pilot basis, the Corps has provided relatively few jobs (2,600 in the summer of 1971 and $3.5 million in fiscal 1972). In spite of the lack of publicity for the program, 124,000 applications were received for the 2,600 jobs in the first year and the program had only a 4% dropout rate. Under the new bill, the Corps would be expanded in two stages, $30 million for about 25,000 openings in 1973 and $60 million for 50,000 openings in 1974.

Those in the helping professions who are working directly with students in the areas of employment counseling and career planning should watch for further reports on the status of the YCC Bill.

Accountability Gaining As Counseling Issue

In recent months there have been a variety of monographs and programs developed to assist counselors in the areas of professional accountability and program evaluation. The California PGA has published three monographs which provide practical guidelines to accountability for pupil personnel supervisors and practitioners. Monograph 1 is "Stating the Goals of Counseling" (1966) by John D. Krumboltz, $1.50; Monograph 2 is "Evaluating Pupil Personnel Programs" (1971) Robert W. O'Hare and Barbara Lasser, $3.50; and Monograph 3 is "Accountability in Pupil Personnel Services: A Process Guide for the Development of Objectives" (1971) edited by H.S. Sullivan and Robert W. O'Hare, $5.00. The last two monographs deal with the development of performance objectives and evaluation procedures. All monographs are available from the California Personnel and Guidance Association, 654 East Commonwealth Avenue, Fullerton, California 92631.

District 11 Alabama PGA counselors have developed a pamphlet defining their role entitled "Who Are You?" The pamphlet is designed to help counselors conceptualize their role and function within the academic community. Single copies are $1.00. Checks should be made payable to District 11 Alabama PGA and ordered from: Rae Sykes, Chapman Junior High School, 2006 Reuben Drive, N.E., Huntsville, Alabama 35811.

Finally, counselors may now be "under the gun" to demonstrate their competencies by way of written examinations. The National Teacher Examinations programs now includes a section on guidance. This testing program is administered nationally four times a year, and candidates are tested in knowledge of professional and general education, and in one of the examination's Teaching Areas.

Another examination, "Guidance Counselor," has been available for administration since November 11. Major areas to be tested include: (1) interpersonal communication, (2) observing and describing, (3) goal setting, (4) systems for changing behavior, (5) finding and providing information, and (6) evaluating outcomes. In addition to the traditional paper-and-pencil format, a portion of the examination will include audio-taped counseling vignettes. Those in supervisory positions wishing to examine the potential of this testing program should write to National Teacher Examinations, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey 08540 for a descriptive leaflet and sample questions.

South Dakota PGA Passes Privileged Communication Law

The South Dakota Personnel and Guidance Assn. believes their new state law relating to privileged communications for counselors in elementary and secondary schools is good. Since the law is new, only time will reveal its effectiveness. Other state branches of APGA may wish to examine this law as a model for replication in their state. A copy of the act follows:

"Be it enacted by the legislature of the State of South Dakota: No counselor, certified in accordance with the certification regulations of the state board of education and regularly employed as a counselor for a private or public elementary or secondary school or school system in the state of South Dakota, may divulge to any other person, or be examined concerning any information or communication given to him in his official capacity by a student unless: (1) this privilege is waived in writing by the student; or (2) the information or communication was made to the counselor for the express purpose of being communicated or being made public."

Materials Abound to Update Counselor Skills

The need to update counselor skills is always a priority. Counselors' sharing of activities and roles may be a partial answer to this need. The fall months have seen the development of a variety of new programs and publications for all educational levels worth sharing among helping professionals.

1 "TA for Kids (and Grown-Ups Too)" presents transactional analysis for children in short words and simple phrases. It is based upon the work of Eric Berne and Tom Harris and is intended for use by children in grades 3 to 6. It can be purchased directly from Alvyn M. Freed, 391 Monroe Street, Sacramento, California 95825.

2 Gilbert Parent, Counselor, Project CHILD, Route 59 and Holmdorf Road, West Chicago, Illinois 60185, has developed an extensive package of training materials for peer counselors in the elementary school. The student leaders' training is based on Adlerian assumptions for understanding personality; the training materials are detailed and extensive.

3 The National Institute of Education, Waterford, Connecticut 06385, has available a monthly publication, **Guidance and Motivation,** which cites specific case studies in elementary and junior high schools.

4 Looking for materials on guidance practices in the elementary school? Betty Pederson and David Frey recently organized a packet of materials entitled **Compendium of Elementary Guidance Materials.** These materials can be obtained without charge by writing directly to: David Frey, Counseling Coordinator, 25800 Hillary, Hayward, California 94542.

5 Finally, a handbook for counselors, **A Guide to Informal Discrimination of Learning Disorders,** was published this year by the Wyoming State Department of Education. This booklet is an attempt to provide a useful tool for the counselor in working with special children, their parents, and school personnel. Counselors interested in a copy of this booklet may write to Tom Morris, Office of Pupil Personnel Services, Wyoming State Department of Education, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001.

RESEARCH FROM THE FIELD

(FUNDED AND PRIVATE PROJECTS)

When is success not completely successful? When it is achieved through individually prescribed instruction (IPI). According to the results of an in-depth study involving 700 Pittsburgh students, those who had been in an IPI program for two or three years had lower self concepts than newcomers to the program. These discouraging results were consistent for both high-achieving and average-achieving youngsters, suggesting that the IPI program itself may be causing these decreased self perceptions. Authors conclude that no school program can provide for high self concept when peer interaction is absent.

Education Summary, August 18, 1972 ●

The opiate of the people, according to Karl Marx, is religion, but heroin is the status symbol of the streets. The heroin user is a hero in his neighborhood, with great strength, courage, brutality, and all the other "qualities" admired by his peers. According to a study of 150 drug users in a white working-class area in Boston, there is a street social structure ranging from the "faggot" at the lowest level to "crazy guy" at the top. To move from one to the other requires a constant effort of bravado of which drug use is an integral part. The more dangers associated with a particular drug, the more respect given to the user. Only those at the top of the status pyramid are into big-time heroin. Marijuana use alone represents total failure on the streets.

Human Behavior, v1 n5 p33-34 ●

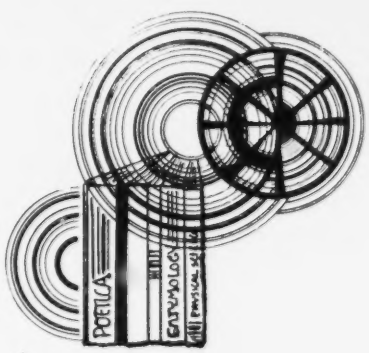
When blacks are bused, they need a friend at the end of the trip. Black children bused into predominantly white schools find the going easier if they have some white friends. Black students in a recently integrated junior high school found they could cope with the higher academic standards if they were able to make some friends from among the white youngsters. Many of the latter, however, though willing to be friends, were anxious over the effects their relationships with the new black students would have on their relationships with teachers.

Comment: Let's deal with the attitudes of the educators before establishing social peer relationships between whites and blacks, and then deal with any academic problems that may exist.

An experiment involving all six schools in Lebanon, Indiana, found that hiring a staff of seven to replace a teacher can improve teaching conditions as well as save money. The staff is composed of one paraprofessional, two aids, one intern, one participating observer and two student teachers. The saving of hiring a regular teacher is more than $350! The superintendent feels that the staff provides more individual attention as well as varied experiences, talents and educational levels. The pupil/adult ratio is 13:1 on most differentiated staff teams, which obviously allows for more individual attention than the heavier pupil/teacher ratios.

Phi Delta Kappan, v54 n2 p142 ●

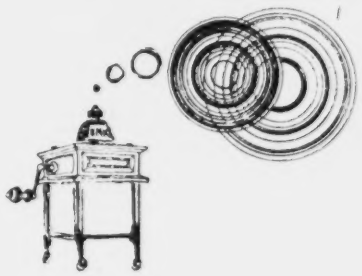
Comment: This team approach sounds great—if the paraprofessional can meet the state certification requirements, and is willing to teach at a stipend less than a regular teacher's salary.



Students who move a lot are more at ease in college! This is an implication of the results of a limited study of undergraduates. Those who were high residentially-mobile reported less anxiety than did low mobile students, both in acute situations and on chronic measures. High mobile males were more intellectually oriented than were the low mobile, placing more value on autonomy and independence, and being more adaptive.

Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, v39, n1, p37-42 ●

Comment: Moving around a lot seems to be a mixed bag of tricks. While it may create problems of rootlessness and loss of identity, it may increase flexibility and independence. School personnel should tune in to these possibilities.



They're behaving better but they may not be enjoying it. In three classroom studies on the effects of teacher reinforcement on chronically misbehaving elementary pupils, it was found, as predicted, that positive teacher reinforcement, verbal and nonverbal, extinguished significant numbers of such behaviors per observation period. Oddly enough, although the children seemed to feel good about their new relationship with their teachers, they retained positive written attitudes toward their former deviant behaviors! This phenomenon may be explained by the fact that their former behaviors had set them apart from their classmates and had thus given them a certain self-esteem which they sought to retain, at least internally. Self report measures thus appeared to serve a function of the child's personality rather than a function of accurate attitude assessment.

Psychology in the Schools, v9 n3 p278-287 ●

Comment: If you're going to single out a child for classroom actions, make it for good rather than bad behaviors. It not only couldn't hurt—it could help a lot.

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RESEARCH FROM THE IVORY TOWER

(DISSERTATIONS)

Just what is the role of the counselor in the high school setting? This question was the focus of a recent investigation which used a sampling of students, teachers, counselors, and administrators in 14 school districts of the west-suburban Boston area. All the schools were public, comprehenhensive high schools.

Counselors, teachers, and administrators saw the function of helping students with psychological problems as an essential counselor role and, in addition, did not perceive counselors as effective with students in this function. Students, however, neither saw this as an essential function of the counselor nor thought that counselors were effective and well trained in this capacity. A second area of discrepancy between counselors and students was on counselors' confidentiality. Whereas counselors rated themselves favorably in this function, students rated the counselors ineffective and poorly trained in this function. Also, while all four groups were favorable toward counselor performance in helping students choose colleges and other post-secondary schools, they were unanimous in not perceiving counselors as effective, active or well trained in helping the non-college bound. Significantly, all four groups perceived the working relationship between counselors and teachers as favorable.

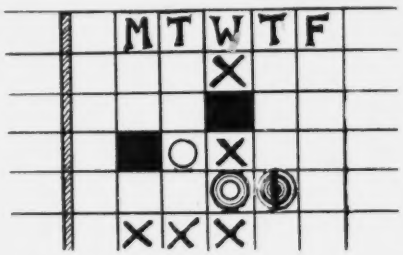
Dissertation Abstracts International, 33(1) p159-A ●

Comment: If you're still attempting to give students psychological counseling, your time might be better spent refocusing your efforts on non-college bound students.

A recent study investigated adolescents' perception of parental behavior toward them and the relationship of this behavior to sex, delinquency, and security. 240 adolescents participated in the study, half boys and half girls; half of each sex group was drawn from two juvenile institutions. Conclusions included: 1) delinquent adolescents did not get consistent behavior from their parents; 2) there is a relationship between an adolescent's security and his perception of his parents' behavior as loving or rejecting; and 3) while both adolescent males and females perceive paternal behavior toward them as more consistent than maternal behavior toward them, they also perceive paternal behavior as more discriminating between the sexes and more contributory to their delinquency or non-delinquency than maternal behavior.

Dissertation Abstracts International, 33(3) p903-A ●

Comment: Counselors, take heed: from an adolescent perception, Dad's behavior, while more consistent, is more influential than the Mom's behavior in the delinquent or nondelinquent development of the child. This would suggest strongly that you include Dad in your conferences about any phase of Johnny's development.



What differences in attitudes are there between students who attend school consistently and those who don't? Are students with attendance problems less capable of doing the required school work? Is there any one factor that relates significantly to student attendance patterns? These and several other questions on student attendance were investigated with students and teachers in the Burbank (California) Unified School District. Findings from the study lend credence to the idea that lack of attendance in school may have more to do with the student's home environment than with his school environment. For example, the conclusions support that: 1) there is little or no difference in the students' attitudes toward school; 2) students who attend school inconsistently generally are capable of doing the work expected of them; and 3) the mother's relationship to the child seems to be one of the most important factors in school attendance. Other conclusions were that those students with attendance problems tend to see school as a less rewarding experience than those without and that there seems to be a greater amount of family upset in families of students with attendance problems.

Dissertation Abstracts International, 33(2) pp.514-15-A ●

Comment: Since students with attendance problems generally are capable of doing the required school work, a productive target for the counselor to select would be the parents and the family environment as well as the student.

An investigation of inner-city teachers designed to describe the personality characteristics of teachers judged "effective" by students, teachers, and administrators found two factors held in common by the teachers selected as "most effective."

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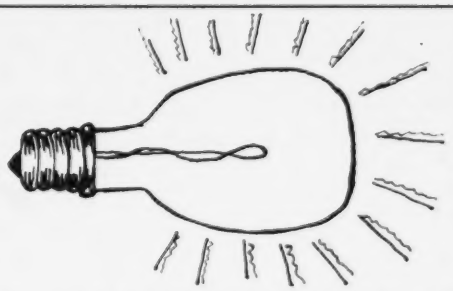

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First, these teachers have a high level of energy and aliveness coupled with an awareness of the world and an ability to relate constantly to that world. Second, they are tense, ambitious, and restless persons who approach their work with a sense of urgency. The students' perspective alone—the similarity of characteristics such as high energy level, high degree of awareness, and greater responsiveness—suggests that students view the teacher as requiring greater than average energy to maintain an effective pace as she or he meets the challenges of more advanced classes.

Dissertation Abstracts International, 33(1), p.194-A ●

A 1971 study on public attitudes toward the schools, conducted in Phoenix, Arizona with high school juniors, seniors, and community adults, drew the following conclusions: 1) most students and adults believe the school curriculum does NOT meet the needs of the community; 2) most students and adults want a comparison of the educational achievement of their local schools with that of other communities, using national tests; 3) most students and adults oppose tenure for teachers; 4) most students and adults believe the high school students should have more influence over the curriculum, school rules, and student dress; however, most adults are in disagreement with most students that students should have more say about teachers; 5) most students and adults agree that guidance counselors are important to the school program; 6) most students and adults approve of sex education, including discussion on birth control; and, finally, 7) most students and adults not only favor a system that holds teachers and administrators accountable for the progress of students, but also favor a system of paying teachers and administrators on the basis of the quality of their work rather than on the basis of a standard scale.

Dissertation Abstracts International, 33(3), pp909-10A ●

Comment: Not only do students and adults agree that teachers and administrators should be accountable for the quality of their work; they also agree that students should have more influence in school policies that affect students. It seems that a more "participative democracy" is advocated for the school setting, with the caveat that the participants (parents, teachers, students, administrators, etc.) are then responsible and accountable for their participation.

Many communities assume that their teachers hold anti-drug attitudes and that teacher behavior is consistent with these attitudes. However, in a recent doctoral investigation, conducted in an anonymous suburban high school, the teachers' reported that they consumed coffee, alcohol, aspirin, prescription drugs, vitamins, tobacco, and marijuana. The following general conclusions were reached: 1) marijuana use was not uncommon; 2) tobacco smoking was a prevalent practice; 3) 39% of the staff admitted to the possibility of coffee misuse; 4) alcohol consumption was a weekly routine for an overwhelming majority; 5) the use of aspirin was widespread and acceptable to the staff; 6) daily vitamin consumption was substantial; and 7) there existed an acknowledged practice of medical consultation related to prescription drug possession.

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